

HOLLYWOOD, MD - Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD) today thanked members of the St. Mary's Hurricane Relief Fund as they loaded trucks with goods and presents bound for Hurricane Katrina victims in D'Iberville, MS.

"The holiday season is a time for giving," Hoyer said. "The children and families displaced in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina need our help and I am proud that my constituents are donating their time and effort to make Christmas just a little brighter on the Gulf Coast."

The St. Mary's Hurricane Relief Fund was established in August due in large part to the Hurricane Katrina disaster. It is a collaborative effort by Joe St. Clair, Tom Jarboe, and Donald Cropp who wanted to find a way to offer their assistance. With the help of several members of the St. Mary's County Chamber of Commerce, and St. Mary's Parish, their efforts are now being recognized throughout the county.

"I want to express my deep gratitude to Joe, Tom, Don, and the rest of the volunteers," Hoyer said. "Their hard work and dedication have made Operation Mississippi Christmas possible, and the entire community has embraced this mission of care and compassion."

At the request of Congressman Hoyer, BAE Systems agreed to cover the cost of transporting the goods.

The Christmas presents are expected to arrive in D'Iberville on Monday, December 12th. The volunteers will be distributing:

- 200 book bags loaded with school supplies
- 50 additional first aid kits
- Cases of needed medical supplies for the D'Iberville clinic
- Quilts donated by the Amish Community to be sent to the Point of Distribution (POD) center at the old Jitney
- Donated bicycles

- Hundreds of duffle bags donated by Congressman Hoyer
- 35 complete computer systems with printers, cables, etc., all donated by SMARTCO
- Defibrillator batteries and a charger donated by St. Mary's Hospital
- 1160 WalMart gift cards for the upper middle and High School students

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